

## **National Honor Society Bylaws Cape Elizabeth High School Chapter**



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## **I. Selection Process**

Membership in the National Honor Society is one of the highest honors that can be awarded to a high school student. The National Honor Society of Cape Elizabeth High School is a duly chartered and affiliated chapter of this prestigious national organization. Honorees are selected by a 5-member Faculty Council, appointed by the principal. Each spring members of the Faculty Council bestow this honor upon qualified students on behalf of the faculty of Cape Elizabeth High School. Standards for selection are established by the national organization and are consistent with the national constitution. These standards have been revised to meet the local chapter needs.

The National Honor Society strives to recognize students who have demonstrated excellence in each of the following areas:

1. Scholarship
2. Leadership
3. Service
4. Character

These four standards are the basis for selection. No student is inducted solely based on academic performance. See Section II: Four Standards for details.

Students in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades are eligible. For the scholarship criterion, at the end of the first semester, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students must have an unweighted, cumulative GPA of at least 93 or a weighted, cumulative GPA of at least 118. Students must have attended CEHS for a minimum of one semester. The student's core academic courses must be college preparatory, honors or AP level. Students with incompletes are not eligible for consideration. 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who meet the scholarship requirement will be notified in writing and will be given the opportunity to be considered for NHS membership by the Faculty Council. A notification letter will be mailed to the home of each eligible candidate. The letter will include a link to the website which includes the ByLaws. (Changed so we don't have to mail the ByLaws to the home).

Students who are interested in being considered for this honor must do the following:

1. The student and a parent or guardian must complete and sign the Response Form included with the letter indicating interest in NHS. Students who are not interested in NHS may opt out by indicating this on the form and returning it to the NHS Adviser. Students who do not return the Response Form are assumed to be "opting out" of the process and are not eligible for consideration by the Faculty Council.
2. The student and a parent or guardian must complete and sign the Student Activity Information Form that provides the Faculty Council with information about the student's leadership and service. The form must be filled out completely including names and contact information for adults who can verify the student's leadership and service activities.
3. The student and at least one parent or guardian must attend a mandatory meeting with the principal and NHS Adviser to review the selection process. The principal will schedule that meeting. (Changed this meeting from informational to mandatory to minimize problems like missed deadlines, incomplete paperwork, etc.)

Both the Response Form and the Student Activity Information Form must be completed, signed by the student and a parent or guardian and returned to the NHS adviser by the

deadline. Students who do not return the completed forms including all necessary signatures by the deadline will not be considered by the Faculty Council.

To evaluate a student's character, the Faculty Council uses multiple sources of input. First, school disciplinary records are reviewed. Second, all faculty members are solicited via a survey for input regarding their professional reflections and experiences with each student. The survey addresses the standards of leadership, service and character. In addition, students may submit up to three letters of character reference for consideration. The letters must come from a responsible adult who knows the student well and can vouch for that student's character. In order to give the Faculty Council a broad perspective, students are asked not to solicit character reference letters from high school staff members.

The Faculty Council considers all this information and may request any additional information necessary for consideration during the selection process. All information used by the Faculty Council for the selection process is confidential. A majority vote of the Faculty Council is required for selection. Prior to notification of any candidates, the chapter adviser shall review with the principal the results of the Faculty Council's deliberations. All students are notified in writing regarding selection or non-selection. Any student who wishes to appeal the decision of the Faculty Council must submit a letter of appeal to the principal within seven days of the date of the notification letter from the Faculty Council. Appeals are limited to ensuring that the selection process conforms to the selection process established by the Faculty Council and published in the chapter's bylaws. Once the seven-day appeals period expires, all records pertaining to the current round of selection are destroyed.

Following notification, a formal induction ceremony is held at the school to recognize all the new honorees. Once inducted, new members are required to attend chapter meetings held twice monthly during the school year, and participate in the individual and chapter service projects throughout the year. In addition, members must maintain the same high level of performance for all four standards (scholarship, leadership, service and character) for the remainder of their high school career.

The procedure for determining compliance is outlined in the National Honor Society Handbook 16<sup>th</sup> Edition:

"It is the responsibility of the chapter adviser to periodically review the standing of members for compliance with Honor Society standards and for fulfillment of chapter obligations as described in the chapter bylaws. When a member falls below any of the standards by which the member was selected or fails to fulfill chapter obligations, the adviser should inform the errant member in writing of the nature of the violation, the time period given for improvement, and provide warning of the possible consequences of non-improvement (i.e., consideration of dismissal or additional disciplinary measures being imposed). If the student does not make the improvement in the specified time, that student is subject to whatever disciplinary measures are considered appropriate by the Faculty Council. Disciplinary measures other than dismissal are acceptable for minor offenses. For example, the Faculty Council may suspend certain chapter privileges, remove a member from chapter office, request that the student perform additional school or community service activities, or have the student receive special counseling."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> National Honor Society Handbook 16<sup>th</sup> Edition, p. 63

“Members are allowed limited warnings during their membership, and in the case of a flagrant violation of school rules or the law, a warning is not required for dismissal, but a hearing will still be held. The hearing is identified in the NHS constitution as a right of membership; is guaranteed as due process as identified by the 14th

Amendment of the U.S. Constitution; and requires the chapter to notify the member of the action being contemplated, the reasons for the action, the date and time of the hearing, and the opportunity for the member to respond either in writing or orally. A student who is dismissed or who resigns is never again eligible for membership in NHS.”<sup>2</sup>

Students or parents who have questions regarding the selection process or membership obligations can contact the chapter adviser Ginger Raspiller or the principal Jeffrey Shedd at 207-799-3309 or via email at [ginger\\_raspiller@cape.k12.me.us](mailto:ginger_raspiller@cape.k12.me.us) and [jeffrey\\_shedd@cape.k12.me.us](mailto:jeffrey_shedd@cape.k12.me.us)

*Adopted by the C.E.H.S. Faculty Council and approved by the principal, March 23, 2007*  
*Revised by the C.E.H.S. Faculty Council and approved by the principal, March 26, 2008*  
*Revised by the C.E.H.S. Faculty Council and approved by the principal, March 17, 2009*  
*Revised by the C.E.H.S. Faculty Council and approved by the principal, March 4, 2011*

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<sup>2</sup> National Honor Society Handbook 16<sup>th</sup> Edition, p. 64

## **II. Four Standards**

### **Scholarship**

The scholarship requirement set by the National Council is based on a student's cumulative GPA. Cumulative GPA refers to the total academic performance as demonstrated by the high school student's grades. The Faculty Council of the local chapter establishes the minimum required cumulative GPA. The Faculty Council may specify a prerequisite number and level for academic courses and may weight grades in recognition of the varying degrees of difficulty of courses of study. Students who meet the scholarship requirement as outlined by the Faculty Council are then eligible for consideration on the basis of service, leadership, and character.

### **Leadership**

The leadership criterion is considered highly important for membership selection. Leadership includes offices a student has held in school or community organizations. The Faculty Council recognizes that leadership also exists outside elected positions including effective participation in positions of responsibility in other activities offered on campus such as athletic team captains, section leaders in band and chorus, committee chairs in student groups, etc. All leadership roles in both the school and community may be considered, provided they can be verified. This list is for consideration purposes only and should not be thought of as a checklist for this criterion. The student who exercises leadership:

- Is resourceful in proposing new problems, applying principles, and making suggestions
- Demonstrates initiative in promoting school activities
- Exercises positive influence on peers in upholding school ideals and spirit
- Contributes ideas that improve the civic life of the school
- Is able to delegate responsibilities
- Exemplifies positive attitudes
- Inspires positive behavior in others
- Demonstrates academic initiative
- Successfully holds school offices or positions of responsibility
- Conducts business effectively and efficiently
- Demonstrates reliability and dependability
- Is a leader in the classroom, at work, or in other school or community activities
- Is dependable in any responsibility accepted

### **Service**

Service is generally considered to be those actions undertaken by the student which are done with or on behalf of others without any direct financial or material compensation. In considering service, the contributions a candidate has made to school, classmates, and community as well as the student's attitude toward service can be reviewed. This list is for consideration purposes only and should not be thought of as a checklist for this criterion. The student who serves:

- Volunteers and provides dependable and well-organized assistance, is gladly available, and is willing to sacrifice to offer assistance
- Works well with others and is willing to take on difficult or inconspicuous responsibilities
- Cheerfully and enthusiastically renders any requested service to the school
- Is willing to represent the class or school in interclass and interscholastic competition
- Does committee and staff work without complaint

- Participates in some activity outside of school (e.g., Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, religious groups, volunteer services for the elderly, poor, or disadvantaged)
- Mentors persons in the community or students at other schools
- Shows courtesy by assisting visitors, teachers, and students

All service references by candidates must include verification (signature and contact information) by an adult supervisor of the activity under consideration.

### **Character**

Character is probably the most difficult criterion to define. The Faculty Council considers positive as well as the negative aspects of character. All judgments in this and other selection criteria should be free of speculation and rumor. National Honor Society is a member of the Character Counts!™ Coalition ([www.charactercounts.org](http://www.charactercounts.org)). Through this activity, the Honor Society supports and recommends the use of a multifaceted definition known as the Six Pillars of Character. A person of character demonstrates the following six qualities: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Schools are encouraged to take this model, modify it to meet their local needs, and use it frequently in the work of their chapter. Chapters can consider the following descriptors as they develop their local definition and standard for character. This list is for consideration purposes only and should not be thought of as a checklist for this criterion. The student of character:

- Takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously
- Consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior (e.g., cheerfulness, friendliness, poise, stability)
- Cooperates by complying with school regulations concerning property, programs, office, halls, etc.
- Demonstrates the highest standards of honesty and reliability
- Regularly shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others
- Observes instructions and rules, is punctual, and faithful both inside and outside the classroom
- Manifests truthfulness in acknowledging obedience to rules, avoiding cheating in written work, and showing an unwillingness to profit by the mistakes of others
- Actively helps rid the school of bad influences or environment

The National Council has approved the following recommendations for use when considering the character of candidates:

A candidate will be able to demonstrate an outstanding record of conduct and behavior with regard to school and community rules, guidelines, and policies. The Faculty Council will consider the following sources to assess a student's character:

- Administrative records of the school
- Counseling records from the guidance office
- Conduct or behavior grades or ratings (including comments) on report cards
- Professional records of individual faculty members (grade books, etc.)
- Comments from the faculty survey

From: National Honor Society Handbook 16<sup>th</sup> Edition, p. 29-31.

### **III. The Five Constitutional Obligations of a Duly Inducted Member**

1. Dues (Article IV, Section 3)—Members may be asked to pay annual chapter dues. The constitution limits this amount to \$10 per student per year. For this amount and any other obligatory expenses bestowed upon members, the school should be able to provide alternative sources of funding for those students who may be incapable of paying. The authentic inability of a member or his or her family to pay such financial obligations should not be the reason for discipline or dismissal of any member. Chapters are not required to charge dues, but once established, members can be required to meet this obligation in a timely manner.
2. Maintaining standards (Article VIII, Section 1)—Once selected, all members are expected to maintain the standards by which they were selected. The implication here is that members are well informed concerning what those selection standards were as published in the description of the local selection process.
3. Meetings (Article XIII, Section 1)—Chapters hold meetings and may require members to attend. The schedule of these meetings should be well publicized. In addition, chapter officers should work closely with the adviser to see that the agenda for all meetings is well thought out and planned for.
4. Chapter service projects (Article XIV, Sections 1 and 2)—All chapters are required to sponsor a chapter service project and all members are required to participate, assuming that the project meets the criteria as outlined in the constitution.
5. Individual service projects (Article XIV, Section 4)—In addition to the chapter service project, members are to engage in additional service according to their own talents and interests. The quantity of this service and the degree to which the chapter monitors this activity should be defined in the chapter bylaws.

Additional obligations (Article XVI, Section 2)—If additional obligations exist for members of the chapter, such obligations should be spelled out in the chapter bylaws for all members to see. It is recommended that a set of these bylaws be presented to each member yearly as a reminder of these and all member obligations.



#### **IV. Response Form**

Please complete this form and return it to the NHS adviser Ginger Raspiller by:

**3:00 PM Friday March 25, 2011**

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I would like to be considered for National Honor Society

\_\_\_\_ No, I am not interested in being considered for National Honor Society

Note: Students who do not respond are considered to be opting out of the process and are not eligible for consideration by the Faculty Council.

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Student Name

Student Signature

Date

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Parent or Guardian Name

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date

*Adopted by the C.E.H.S. Faculty Council and approved by the principal, March 23, 2007*

*Revised by the C.E.H.S. Faculty Council and approved by the principal, March 26, 2008*

*Deadlines revised for Spring 2009 Selection, March 17, 2009*

*Deadlines revised for Spring 2010 Selection, March 12, 2010*

*Deadlines revised for Spring 2011 Selection, March 4, 2011*